



God Works Out Sins for Good

Romans 11:11-24

I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy (Romans 11:11—KJV).

I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous (Romans 11:11—NASB).

Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious (Romans 11:11—NRSV).

Sometimes God can work out anyone's sins for good. In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose (see Romans 8:28). Many Christians know from their own experiences when God worked good out of evil for them. Paul gave an example of how God worked good out of the sins of those who rejected Jesus. After many of his people rejected his preaching, Paul turned to the Gentiles; many of them listened, turned from their sins, trusted in Jesus, and received salvation. When some of those who had rejected Jesus as their Savior became envious of the Gentiles, they reconsidered the evidence, came to believe in Jesus, and were reconciled to God and the Gentiles. God took the sins of some and repurposed those sins with their evil consequences so others could hear the good news and come to faith in Jesus. Some who have sinfully and violently rejected Jesus and God's people have had their lives worked out for good, because God had a purpose, God repurposed them: the Apostle Paul is a good example. Many Christians have found better church homes because they loved God despite the sins committed against them in their old church. God worked out unimaginable sins against them for their good and the good of others as God gave them new opportunities. In addition, after they have become Christians, some have become aware of forgotten transgressions; and where they could not make amends or ask forgiveness; so, they have prayed for God to bless those they have harmed.

Thinking Further

1. When Paul “failed” in his outreach to the Jews, what did he do and how did he feel about it?
2. What did Paul mean by “the world” and the reconciliation of “the world.”
3. When he used an olive tree as an illustration, how did Paul describe the Jews who rejected Jesus and what could happen to them?
4. How did Paul use an olive tree to describe Gentiles who believed in Jesus?
5. What warning did Paul give the Gentile Christians?